

Miscellaneous Notes

1. RINDERPEST IN MUDUMALAI AND BANDIPUR

There has been a very serious outbreak of rinderpest in the jungles in low country to the north and north-west of the main Nilgiri Range, particularly in the Mudumalai and Bandipur Wild Life Sanctuaries.

The disease was first noticed among the valuable domestic buffaloes which are grazed in the Singara, Moyar and Sigur Reserved Forests east of Mudumalai. Over 300 of these large, healthy, aggressive animals which are totally unlike the buffaloes of the plains were wiped out in less than 2 months from the middle of July 1968. Curiously, hardly any of the horde of decrepit cattle in the area were affected.

From August onwards the gaur began to fall victims to the disease. The 'cattle plague' swept through Mudumalai in August, September and part of October with disastrous results. In Mudumalai alone over 100 carcasses were found near water and by the road side. How many more succumbed to the disease in the interior, no one would know.

I believe the disease claimed several victims among the gaur in adjoining Bandipur.

A few sambar were also found dead in Mudumalai. From October up to the third week of November 1968, instances of death among chital and more casualties among sambar was reported. Some wild pigs were also found dead. The cause of these deaths has not so far been established.

All this waste of valuable wild life points to the necessity of organising our wild life preservation efforts in our sanctuaries, on a proper scientific basis, to meet emergencies of this nature.

KING AND PATRIDGE,
SOLICITORS,
OOTACAMUND,
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